



# CENTER FOR PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

An Affiliate of Harvard Medical School at The Cambridge Hospital

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December 22, 1994

The Honorable Commissioner Andrew Barrett  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Dear Commissioner Andrew Barrett,

I am writing to urge you to defend the best interests of our nation's children by strengthening the guidelines for the Children's Television Act.

Millions of American children grow up facing constant crises such as hunger, poverty, family problems and violence -- leaving them ill-prepared to learn in school. Millions more are educated in underfunded and troubled school systems. The number of school drop-outs and illiterate high school graduates increases dramatically each year. These trends imperil our nation's health, security and future.

Television has an unparalleled influence in the lives of all Americans and can play an unprecedented role in nourishing the minds of our nation's children. Today children have better access to sensationalistic talk shows, violent cartoons, and adult sitcoms than they do to programming designed to enrich their minds. This must change.

The market forces, which govern how shows are developed and aired, are biased against educational programming for children. We cannot leave the educational needs of our nation's children in the unseen hands of market forces. Inaction has already led to the dominance of shows cynically designed to serve as marketing vehicles for toys, candy and other products.

The FCC must stand up for our children. The FCC must provide broadcasters with a clearer definition of "educational" programming and make sure that television stations air at least one hour a day of these shows between 7 a.m. - 10 p.m. in regularly scheduled time slots. America's children are counting on you.

Sincerely,

*Vivienne Simon*

Vivienne Simon  
Executive Director  
The Center for Psychology and Social Change

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MM 93-48

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FEB 15 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

The Honorable Rachelle Chong  
Member  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Rachelle Chong,

In 1990 the Children's Television Act of 1990 was enacted.  
In our area the Law is being ignored.

In your position as a member of the Federal Communication Commission I ask that the FCC strengthen the guidelines of the Children's Television Act by establishing real policies designed to safeguard the interests of our children. These policies need to include a clear definition of educational programming and a requirement that television stations air at least one hour a day of 30 minute educational shows between 7:00 AM and 10:00 PM in regularly scheduled time slots.

Yours is the only regulatory body that can make this happen. Please...our children are our future. They are counting on you.

*Gwen Thibodeau*

Gwen Thibodeau  
Family Issues Chairman  
Montana Association for Family and Community Education  
1850 Marshall Canyon Rd.  
Missoula, MT 59802

cc: Susan Ness  
James Quello  
Andrew Barrett ✓

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North Dakota Association for  
Family and Community Education

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

January 25, 1995

Commissioner Andrew Barrett  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Barrett:

I understand the FCC is in the process of drafting a notice of proposed rule making in regards to the Children's Television Act of 1990.

You received many proposal options during the June, 1994, FCC hearings. I urge you to consider the children, who will be tomorrows leaders, when you consider the rules you will propose. Children need our protection and special consideration.

The FCC needs to strengthen the guidelines of the Children's Television Act by establishing real policies designed to safeguard the interests of our children. These should include a clearer definition of "educational" programming and a requirement that television stations air at least one hour a day of 30-minute educational shows between 7 a.m. - 10 p.m. in regularly scheduled time slots. These programs should be new programs not repeats of programs already available that might fall into this category.

You can help to contribute to a better future for our children by requiring broadcasters and producers to be more responsible in their programming and provide new "educational" programming for our young people.

Sincerely,

*Meredith Gross*

Meredith Gross, Chairman  
NDAFCE Children and Television Project

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Commissioner Andrew Barrett  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Barrett:

We the 39-er's Family and Community Education Organization are writing to urge you to strengthen the guidelines for the Children's Television Act.

As parents and grandparents we are concerned about the increase in sensationalistic talk shows, violent cartoons, and adult sitcoms that are readily accessible to young children. These programs introduce a child to a world of violence, immorality, and dissatisfaction.

We know that broadcasters have the talent to create children's shows which are educational as well as entertaining. Broadcast television can play an unprecedented role in nourishing the minds of our nation's children. The 1974 FCC Policy states, "There are many imaginative and exciting ways in which the medium can be used to further a child's understanding of a wide range of areas: history, science, literature, the environment, drama, music, fine arts, human relations, other cultures and languages, and basic skills such as reading and mathematics which are crucial to a child's development."

The FCC needs to strengthen the guidelines of the Children's Television Act by establishing strict policies designed to safeguard the interests of our children. These should include a clear cut definition of "educational" programming and a requirement that TV stations air at least one hour a day of 30-minute educational shows between 7 am and 10 pm in regularly scheduled time slots.

No other regulatory body is in a position to make this happen. Please ... America's children are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Nancy Overton, Rt 1 Box 89 Kenmare, ND  
Talli Jensen, Rt 1 Box 87 - Kenmare, ND 58746  
Beth O'Neill HC1 Box 69 Kenmare, ND 58746  
Carol Joyce Cook, Rt 1 Box 74, Kenmare 58746  
Dorothy Cook, Rt 1, Box 75, Kenmare, N.D. 58746  
Helen Peterson, P.O. Box 554 - Kenmare, N.D. 58746  
Eleanor J. Nelson P.O. Box 66, Kenmare, N.D. 58746  
Joanne O'Neill RR1, Box 70, Kenmare, ND 58746  
Betty L. Johnson Rt 1 Box 90 Kenmare, N.D. 58746

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FCC MAIL ROOM

Donna Terman  
1043 Berkeley Avenue  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

February 6, 1995

RECEIVED  
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The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chair  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Hundt:

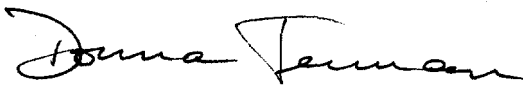
Please do all you can to strengthen the requirements that commercial television stations broadcast good-quality children's programming.

I am very concerned, not only for my own children, but for the many, many children whose television habits are not closely monitored by responsible adults. To me, this is a vitally important national concern. Congress has substantial influence over the airways, and should assert that influence in the public interest.

Currently, there are extremely few acceptable, let alone educational, programs available for children under the age of 10 or 12. Commercial television stations have historically not been willing to buy, produce, or air educational programs or nonviolent programs unless they are required to do so.

I understand that higher-quality children's programs do not have the same profitability as other programs, because they are more expensive to create, they may draw a somewhat smaller audience, and they are often not tied in to commercial endorsements. This is why it is essential that regulations apply to all television stations -- if they all operate under the same restrictions, none of them are at an advantage or disadvantage vis-a-vis their competitors.

I fervently hope that Congress will require at least one hour per day of children's programming, and that the Congress or the FCC will explicitly define what constitutes "educational" programming. Television stations should also be required to include at least 2 hours a week of programs suitable for children under the age of 6.

  
Donna Terman

cc: Hon. Diane Feinstein  
Hon. Barbara Boxer

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Adolescent Pregnancy Child Watch, Los Angeles County  
Advocates for Children and Youth/Maryland Campaign for Kids' TV  
Agenda for Children  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association of School Administrators  
American Psychological Association  
Association for Family and Community Education - Puerto Rico  
Association for Library Service to Children/American Library Association  
Baltimore City Head Start Program  
Center for Children's Media  
Center for Media Education  
Center for Media Literacy  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Center for the Study of Commercialism  
Center on Children, Families and the Law, University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Peggy Charren, Founder of Action for Children's Television  
Children Now  
Children's Advocacy Institute  
Children's Alliance of New Hampshire  
Citizens' Committee for Children  
Citizens for Media Literacy  
Citizens for Missouri's Children  
Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth  
Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C)  
Colorado Children's Campaign  
Connecticut Association for Human Services  
Consumer Federation of America  
Council of Chief State School Officers  
Dodge City Head Start  
Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR)  
Fire Dog Pictures  
Florida Association for Family and Community Education  
Foundation for Family Television  
Friends of Children of Mississippi  
Full Circle Energy Project  
Hillsborough County CARES  
Illinois Association for Family and Community Education  
Indiana Extension Homemakers Association  
Institute for Mental Health Initiatives  
Jack and Jill of America, Inc.  
Kansas Association for Family and Community Education  
Kent Youth and Family Services  
Maryland Association for Family and Community Education  
Massachusetts Media Literacy Coalition

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FEB 15 1995

February 8, 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

The Honorable Reed Hundt  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, NW, Room 814  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt:

We, the undersigned organizations made up of parents, teachers, librarians, psychologists, health care workers, consumer advocates, school board members, and others who care deeply about children, are writing to urge you to strengthen the guidelines for the Children's Television Act.

Millions of American children grow up facing crises such as hunger, poverty, family problems, and violence which leave them ill-prepared to learn in school. Millions more are educated in underfunded and troubled school systems. The number of school drop-outs and illiterate high school graduates increases dramatically each year. These trends imperil our nation's health, security, and future.

Broadcast television can play an unprecedented role in nourishing the minds of our nation's children. In the Commission's own words: "There are many imaginative and exciting ways in which the medium can be used to further a child's understanding of a wide range of areas: history, science, literature, the environment, drama, music, fine arts, human relations, other cultures and languages, and basic skills such as reading and mathematics which are crucial to a child's development." (1974 FCC Policy Statement)

We know that broadcasters have the talent to create children's shows which are as educational as they are entertaining. Yet, today's children have greater access to sensationalistic talk shows, violent cartoons, and adult sitcoms than they do to programming designed to enrich their minds.

The FCC needs to strengthen the guidelines of the Children's Television Act by establishing real policies designed to safeguard the interests of our children. These should include a clearer definition of "educational" programming and a requirement that television stations air at least one hour a day of 30-minute educational shows between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. in regularly scheduled time slots.

No other regulatory body is in a position to make this happen. Please... America's children are counting on you.

Sincerely,

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Media Access Project  
Mental Health Association in Forsyth County, NC  
Mental Health Association of Montgomery County, MD., Inc.  
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Montana Association for Family and Community Education  
National Alliance for Non-violent Programming  
National Association of Child Advocates  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Association of Family and Community Education  
National Campaign for Freedom of Expression  
National Child Care Association  
National Education Association  
National Geographic  
National PTA  
National School Boards Association  
National Stuttering Project  
National Trust for the Development of African American Men  
Nebraska Association of Family and Community Education  
New Hampshire Association for Family and Community Education  
New Mexico Association for Family and Community Education  
Newton Television Foundation  
New York Foundation for the Arts  
North Dakota Association for Family and Community Education  
Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth  
Oregon Association for Family and Community Education  
Rochester Area Children's Collaborative  
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues  
Statewide Youth Advocacy, Inc.  
Summa Associates (child care association)  
United Church of Christ  
United Methodist Women - Faith Church, Rockville, MD  
U.S. Catholic Conference  
Vermont Association for Family and Community Education  
Voices Vs. Violence  
Washington Association for Family and Community Education  
Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network  
Women's National Democratic Club  
Western Dairyland Head Start  
West Virginia KIDS Count Fund  
Writer's Guild of America, East, Inc.



C E N T E R F O R M E D I A E D U C A T I O N

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
FEBRUARY 8, 1995

CONTACT: Jeff Chester  
(202) 628-2620

## **MORE THAN 80 GROUPS SIGN LETTER URGING FCC TO STRENGTHEN CHILDREN'S TV RULES**

WASHINGTON, DC --- A national coalition of more than 80 groups representing parents, consumers, school board members, educators, health professionals, and children delivered a joint letter to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today, calling on the agency to strengthen the guidelines which implement the Children's Television Act. The Commission has been conducting an inquiry for the last two years on ways to improve broadcaster compliance with the 1990 federal law that requires commercial TV stations to air educational and informational programming for children. After several delays, the FCC is expected to issue new proposed rules in March.

"The FCC has had long enough to figure out how to make this law work," said Dr. Kathryn Montgomery, President of the Center for Media Education. "We are calling on the Commission to take decisive action now so that children can reap the benefits of the Children's Television Act."

The letter, addressed to FCC Chairman Reed Hundt, urged the Commission to help preserve the future of quality children's programming on broadcast television by requiring stations to air "at least one hour a day of educational and informational children's shows between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. in regularly scheduled time slots." Additionally, the groups are asking the FCC to provide broadcasters with a clearer definition of educational programming.

Congress passed the Children's Television Act to correct a persistent failure in the commercial TV marketplace. Unfortunately, loopholes in the Act's guidelines have thwarted the law's intent. A 1992 study by the Center for Media Education revealed that many broadcasters, instead of putting new programs on the air, were simply relabeling as "educational" cartoons such as *The Jetsons* and *The Flintstones*. The study prompted the FCC to conduct an examination of its own, which identified similar patterns.

Supporters of quality children's television fear that if stronger guidelines are not put into place, the handful of new programs that do respond to the law -- such as *Beakman's World*, *Bill Nye the Science Guy*, and *Cro* -- will disappear. Quality educational programming is already being steadily edged out of the market by violent kids' shows that have lucrative, licensed product tie-ins such as the popular *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*.

"We are particularly troubled by recent reports that the FCC may allow broadcasters to 'trade away' their programming obligations to children," explained Montgomery. "With public television under attack and the FCC appearing to waffle on enforcement of the Children's Television Act," she said, "the future of quality educational programming for children is in jeopardy."

Among the groups signing the letter to the FCC are the National Education Association, the National PTA, the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association, the National Association for Family and Community Education, the Writer's Guild of America/East, and many more national and state-based organizations.

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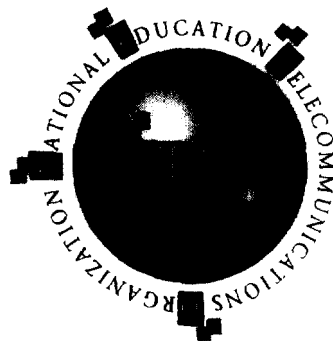
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

## An Overview of the National Education Telecommunications Organization

These are exciting and challenging times. As the nation moves forward on a course for economic growth and productivity for the 21st century, citizens at all economic levels, policy makers and educators are faced with difficult choices. The nation's education systems, are endemic to the nation's economic health and security. Whether officials are reducing the federal deficit, or changing health and defense policies, American education productivity, or the lack of it, will set the pace of economic growth along with the standard and quality of living for Americans for years to come.

Technology has rapidly transformed every sector of our lives--except education. Although telecommunications has turned the world into a global village, America's schools for the most part have remained relatively isolated enterprises. While the educational resources available in this country and around the globe are rich and growing exponentially, the United States is without a technologically integrated telecommunications system available to transport these resources to all children and adults regardless of the wealth and geography of their community.

The plan is to create an integrated nationwide multitechnology infrastructure, a dedicated satellite that links space and existing secondary access roads, i.e., telephone and cable, over which teaching and education resources are delivered and shared with students, teachers, workers and individuals. -- A transparent "I-95." The vision is to "wire" together classrooms, workplaces, libraries and other places of learning, nationwide and internationally, through a dedicated telecommunications system, which can be accessed simultaneously through a telephone instrument, a computer, a fax, a video camera and/or a television set. A modern-day "learning-place" for the rural, urban, migrant, disadvantaged and youths at risk to have equal and affordable access to and utilization of educational resources, teaching and learning tools.

NETO/EDSAT is a not-for-profit organization bringing together public officials, K-12 school districts, colleges, educators, government agencies, and public and private education users of telecommunications to aggregate their buying power, and control of their own destiny with open, equitable, low-cost and interconnected telecommunication services.

Transportation infrastructures are effective and economical when they provide access to increasingly greater numbers of users and when the primary systems interconnect through multiple secondary transportation systems. America's Interstate Highway system gave the American family access to employment, housing, education and other social benefits which far exceed our greatest expectations and dreams.

Access to information is critical to a knowledge-based enterprise like education. Investments in communications' infrastructure for a global economy is closely tied to the growth and economic viability of the education sector. Of equal importance, the U.S. is left with no other choice than to reshape its schools to become the "crown jewel" of a global democratic society. We must prepare all students, regardless of wealth, geography and population density, to be productive, participating citizens for the challenges they will meet in the 21st century.

We hope you will join those of us who share this vision for the "information age."

National Education Telecommunications Organization/Education Satellite

1735 I Street, N.W. Suite 601 Washington, DC 20006 202-293-4211 voice 202-293-4210 fax 800-220-1235 toll free

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**FEB 15 1995**

## **Policies and Purposes**

**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY**

The National Education Telecommunications Organization will encourage cooperation and in conjunction with education institutions, states, and territories and other education program providers will establish, as expeditiously as practicable, an education satellite and other telecommunications systems. These systems are to be governed, managed, and operated by a National Education Telecommunications Organization (NETO) as a part of improving equitable and quality instruction and education opportunities for all children and adults. These systems will be responsive to the public needs, education goals of the states and territories, and will contribute to access and utilization of the national education resources.

The National Education Telecommunications Organization, a not-for-profit, non-federal, voluntary organization will help to provide new and expanded telecommunications services as promptly as possible at the national and international levels to all schools, colleges, universities, libraries, and other distance education centers. In implementing this program, care and attention will be directed toward providing such services to all children and adults regardless of their economic status, personal wealth, or the wealth of their community, or their geographic location, as well as those with economic and geographic advantage, toward delivering efficient and economical access and utilization of satellite and other telecommunication services, and toward the reflection of benefits of these technologies in the quality and charges for such services.

The NETO and its related subsidiary corporations will be organized and operated so as to maintain and strengthen instructional and educational opportunities and services in the provision of communications services to states, schools, colleges, universities, libraries, and other distance education centers.

The National Education Telecommunications Organization's (NETO) primary purposes are educational training, information and research. Its programs are developed to meet the goals of: (1) improving this country's educational, training and instructional opportunities, (2) improving the opportunities for an equal and quality educational experience for all children and adults, regardless of their geographic location or wealth of the community, and (3) improving the equal educational information for schools, colleges, universities, libraries and other distance education centers.

Programs, projects and activities are developed with special care to reach, educate and inform rural and urban schools, migrant students and parents, at-risk students and underserved pupils at all levels of education.

NETO's programs include discussion groups, forums, panels, research, working groups, newsletters and informational publications for the general public as well as education, community and professional organizations. Organizations and individuals whose members include teachers, educators, administrators, faculty, schools, students, press, media and public policymakers are specially targeted for inclusion in these activities.



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## NETO/EDSAT

### MEMBERS

Tom Stipe  
University of Alabama  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Mark Spear  
ALCOA Technical Center  
Alcoa, Pennsylvania

LaDonna Harris\*  
Amer. for Indian Opportunity  
Bernalillo, New Mexico

Frank Beach  
Beach Associates  
Arlington, Virginia

Mabel Phifer\*  
Black Coll. Satellite Network  
Arlington, Virginia

Robert Threlkeld  
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Pomona, California

Ralph Meuter\*  
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Homer Angelo  
University of California  
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Janis Dickens  
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